

Approved Meeting Minutes

Middle School Building Committee Meeting

May 12, 2014 – 8:15 am

BOE Conference Room, 3rd Floor Annex Building

5 Linsley Street, North Haven, CT

Committee Members in Attendance:

Goldie Adele, Miriam Brody , Michael Brandt, Lou Coppola, Sr., Gary Johns (committee chairman), David Mikos, Bruce Morris , Walter Nester, Jr., Joseph Porto, Michelle Spader (committee secretary), Dyann Vissicchio (committee vice-chair)

Absent: None

Others in Attendance: Dr. Robert Cronin, Phil Diana, Attorney Jeff Donofrio, Ed Swinkoski, Kristine Carling, Fritz Morris of Perkins Eastman, Sydney Smith and Graham Curtis of DTC .

Meeting called to order by Chairman Johns at 8:15 am.

Motion made by Bruce Morris to approve the meeting minutes from the May 5, 2014 meeting. It was seconded by Dyann Vissicchio and unanimously passed.

Old Business:

The schedule of required approvals was discussed. The revised Ed Spec was approved last week by the Board of Education. The Perkins Eastman team has been working on updating the cost estimate of the project to reflect those changes. The next step is for the Board of Ed to meet and approve the project schematic. This is scheduled to occur on Thursday, May 15. Then, the Board of Finance will meet on May 21 to approve the schematic and the finances for this project. The Board of Selectman will then hold a special meeting on May 27 to call for a town meeting (slated for June 3) and then the project referendum will occur on June 17.

There was discussion about whether the second referendum question that was mentioned in Mikos' slide presentation, which pertained to field improvements not related to the middle school project, was even allowed to be on the ballot. Attorney Donofrio said the BOS can send any question, for any proper purpose, to the town meeting. An appropriation of funds for public improvements is a valid purpose. This would be a separate project and it is the BOS decision whether it will be added to the ballot.

Michelle Spader expressed the opinion of several building committee members who were not pleased that Dave Mikos added slides to the presentation given to the Board of Education on May 7 without the approval of the building committee. Spader mentioned that the committee met on May 5, went over the presentation slide by slide and told Mikos which slides to modify, yet he took it upon himself to add slides that the committee did not approve.

Information Mikos added to the presentation was from discussions Mikos had with the first selectman and a board of education member prior to the committees meeting on May 5, yet the presentation Mikos made to the building

committee on May 5 did not reflect the information he later added into the slide presentation. Spader questioned why he would omit the information from the draft presentation when he had the opportunity to present it to the committee, and then add it in without the committee's consent afterward.

Mikos felt that the slides he added "tied the presentation together". Spader was not satisfied with that response. She felt that Mikos undermined the committee. Mikos said he could appreciate that it might look like he was circumventing the committee, but there was no conscious effort to do so and apologized if anyone viewed it that way.

Dyann Vissicchio mentioned that she had been asking for the final draft of the presentation since Tuesday, May 6 and was displeased that Mikos waited until 2 hours prior to the Board of Education meeting to send that final draft. Vissicchio also added that the presentation that was done on January 28 that she and Spader prepared was shown to the committee in its entirety and approved by the committee. Vissicchio felt that if she had changed that presentation without committee approval and showed a revised final presentation without the consent of the committee a number of people would have objected. She remarked that never would have happened because she would never make unauthorized changes to a document that was supposed to be representative of the unified committee.

Vissicchio also said she is concerned that the slides with the tax figures are going to be an issue. Mike Freda has already said he does not agree with some of the estimates that were presented on those slides.

Chairman Johns said we can't undo what has already been done and the committee needs to work together for the duration of the project and these issues will be used as lessons learned going forward.

New Business:

Brandt mentioned that there was one email submitted to the committee via nhmsproject@gmail.com. Brandt shared the email with the committee, which was regarding construction noise and safety during the rebuild. Brandt read his draft response to the committee and minor changes were recommended. There was a motion made by Bruce Morris to approve the committee's response to the submitted question. It was seconded by Goldie Adele and unanimously passed.

Michelle Spader asked the committee for permission to have Sydney Smith from DTC add the Road Show presentation to the Middle School Renovation Project Facebook page. The financial information from the road show is now obsolete since the fields have been added into the project, therefore that information will be omitted. Motion was made by Bruce Morris and seconded by Lou Coppola. The motion unanimously passed to approve the posting of the Road Show slides with the removal of the obsolete financial information to the Facebook page.

Spader shared with the committee the criteria which will allow a taxpayer to vote in the referendum. You may vote in a referendum if you are a registered voter in North Haven. However, if you are not a registered voter in North Haven, you may vote "off the grand list". This means that you must own property in North Haven with an assessed value of at least \$1,000 and you must have had ownership of such property prior to October 1, 2013. You must own the property as an individual, not as a partnership or corporation. You must also be at least 18 years old and you must be a US citizen. If you meet all 3 of those criteria, you will be considered a "grand list" voter.

Spader also discussed the steps required to obtain an absentee ballot and the circumstances which allow for an absentee ballot to be obtained. There is additional information on the town's website with links to the State of CT Secretary of State's office where you can print out voter registration forms as well as absentee ballot applications. Absentee ballots for the June 17 referendum are available starting on May 29.

Sub-Committee Reports:

The Safety and Security sub- committee will be meeting on Tuesday, May 13, 2014.

The Marketing sub-committee met on May 8 and came up with several action items that they will be working on. The committee is working on a brochure as well as voting reminders for distribution at town events. There are concerns that the concert on the green the evening of June 17 will cause problems for people looking for parking in order to vote. Chairman Johns is working with various town departments to ensure that is not an issue. Dr. Cronin was asked to send out an all call reminding people to save the date of June 17 as a reminder to come out and vote in the referendum. Cronin was also asked to contact all the principals to have them announce this information any time they do an "all call" for their respective schools in the weeks leading up to the referendum. Dr. Cronin agreed. Putting up poster boards in the schools, library, etc. was discussed as well as having NHTV do a segment with Perkins Eastman to promote the project.

Spader mentioned that the phone banking that she had discussed at a previous meeting was now probably going to be done outside of the committee by individuals who want to take a "vote yes" position. This is necessary because the committee cannot make an official "vote yes" or "vote no" position.

Sydney Smith from DTC wanted permission from the committee to add the June 17 referendum as an event to the project's Facebook page. The motion was made by Bruce Morris and seconded by Goldie Adele. The motion unanimously passed.

Spader asked Smith what the website statistics were. The project website has had over 550 visitors since it launched on April 3, 2014. More updates to the Facebook page and event creation will keep followers engaged in the project. Smith recommended updating the page daily, if possible, even if it means just posting an image from the project.

Fritz Morris from Perkins Eastman presented the committee with updated cost estimates for the project. Morris explained that a professional cost estimator went over the numbers and made recommendations of changes.

It was explained that anything left over in the design contingency (lines 22 & 23) will get rolled into line 69, which is the project contingency. The line item for design contingency disappears once the construction documents are done. The owner contingency and the design contingency are ample, but Donofrio believes the construction manager contingency may not be enough for the renovations portion. Donofrio also believes the construction manager fee (line 30) is too high and should be reduced.

Despite pushing for the south field to be turfed Mikos is now saying that he is not sure that should occur and asked Attorney Donofrio if the revised Ed Specs require the synthetic turf on that South field. Donofrio explained that the language of the approved Ed Spec uses the word "recommended", so that might allow for some flexibility. Chairman Johns commented that he felt the committee should ratify what we asked the Board of Ed to approve. Mikos now thinks that it may be excessive and Joe Porto agrees. Phil Diana feels it is important to put synthetic turf on that field as well, since we will not be allowed to fertilize or use pesticides if we decide to change it to natural turf.

Goldie Adele says he thinks the committee should go with what was presented and voted upon by the Board of Ed. Vissicchio said that if we get to that point in the project and we have overspent our budget, items, including fields, will need to be reviewed and may need to be reduced. Bruce Morris agrees with Adele that the committee should move forward with what was presented and approved by the Board of Ed.

Ultimately the Board of Finance has to determine whether or not they are going to approve the project cost number presented to them. If the BOF does not approve the full amount requested, it will be the committees' responsibility to make programmatic changes in order to reduce the cost of the project. There is concern that if that occurs, there will not be enough time to go back through all of the approvals necessary by the deadline. Johns asked for a motion to keep what was approved by the Board of Ed with regards to the field updates "as is" rather than altering it by removing the synthetic turf upgrade to the South field. Motion was made by Bruce Morris and seconded by Goldie Adele. Motion passed unanimously.

Another line item of note that was reduced by \$1 million (by the cost estimator) was equipment for technology, security and communication. Johns, Vissicchio and Spader expressed concern over this large reduction. Morris said a lot of the costs are already built into the hard costs of construction, therefore it didn't need to be included in this item as well. This is not the only line item where security dollars are included.

Kristine Carling expressed concern with being able to equip the school with the necessary white boards, computers, software, etc. Spader stated that since the beginning of the discussions on this project the committee talked about the need for this school to be equipped with everything needed for the 21st century and now \$1 million is being taken away from it. Fixtures, furnishings and equipment was also reduced by \$300,000. Morris reassured that the cost estimator thought the numbers that were being carried for these items were too high and everything necessary could be achieved at the lower dollar amounts.

Morris had also removed the funding for an owners construction representative. Morris said if a construction manager is hired, that person can take on this role. Donofrio disagreed and wanted that money added back in. He stated that the committee needed someone who is going to review the requisitions every month, advise on change orders, and deal with all the paperwork that comes with the project since no one on the building committee will have the time to take on this task. The committee agreed that this was necessary to the project and the funding will be added back in. This owners rep will not be hired until the construction documents phase of the project, so that when the bid phase begins they are up and running. Donofrio stated the importance of having someone advise the town on such things as tracking the budget, providing change order and scheduling input, etc. The construction manager fees were reduced to offset the cost of adding the owners rep back in.

97% of the square footage of the school will be reimbursed.

The committee voted on the baseline project cost of \$69,814,452 that will be sent to the Board of Ed and Board of Finance, and eventually to the town meeting. Motion to approve by Goldie Adele and seconded by Bruce Morris. Motion unanimously passed.

The building committee will reconvene on Monday, May 19, 2014 at 8:15 am in the Board of Education Conference Room, 3rd Floor Annex.

There was a motion to adjourn at 9:45 am by Bruce Morris, seconded by Walter Nester, Jr. and unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Spader
Committee Secretary